(c) M/s. Swan Telecom Pvt. Ltd. does not hold any UAS Licence as on date. However, the company has been issued 13 letters of Intent for award of UAS licences in 13 service areas. According to the share holding pattern reported by the company as on 13.12.2007, M/s. Tiger Trustee Pvt. Holds 90.1% and M/s. Delphi Investment Ltd. Holds 9.9% paid up equity shares in M/s Swan Telecom Pvt. Ltd.

Postal Development Corporation

208. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal to set up Postal Development Corporation (PDC);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the activities of the PDC after formation;

(d) whether PDC will be set up as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for commercial development of real estate; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and total land available with Postal Development with estimated value of such land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, a proposal has been submitted to the Cabinet for setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for optimum development and management of postal estates.

(e) As per the information available in November, 2007, Department of Posts had 1871 plots lying vacant, total area of which is 38224902 sq. ft. Estimated value of this land is Rs. 65481.02 lakh approximately.

Creation of USO Fund from Telephone Operators

†209. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USO fund of fifteen thousand crore has been created out of the money received from various telephone operators;

(b) the amount spent out of the USO funds during the last five years; and

(c) the names of projects which were financed out of this fund and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) An amount of Rs. 14,998 crore has been collected as universal Service Obligation (USO) Levy from all the telecom service providers during the financial years 2002-03 to 2006-07 and deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI). Out of this, an amount of Rs. 5,081.44 crore has been transferred to Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) through Parliamentary approval during the period from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and spent on various schemes under USOF during this period.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The various projects, which were financed out of this fund, are briefly described below:-

(i) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) Support for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in unconnected villages in the country.

(ii) Provision of subsidy support for provision of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in 1685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs).

(iii) Provision of subsidy support for replacement of Multi Access Radio Relay (MARR) based VPTs.

(iv) Provision of subsidy support for Rural Community phones (RCPs) in villages with population more than 2000 and where there are no Public Call Offices (PCOs).

(v) Subsidy support for the innovative scheme of Sharing of infrastructue by USO Fund to set up 7,871 number of infrastructure sites (in 500 districts) spread over 27 States for provision of mobile service in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage.

(vi) Subidy support to neraly 90.5 lakh RDELs installed prior to 01.04.2002 towards the rental differential between the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) prescribed rental and the rental charged by the service provider for a limited period of 01.04.2002 to 31.01.2004.

Death Message Post Card

†210. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Death Message Post Card costs Rs. 6/-;

(b) if so, whether the price of these post cards widely used by middle and lover income groups is not a bit too much; and

(c) whether the Department of Post propose to reduce the price of the Death message Post Card?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The answer is both yes and no. If the Death Message is handwritten on the Post Card, it will cost only Rs. 0.50. In case the message is printed on the card then it comes under the category of 'Post Card containing Printed Matter' and it will cost Rs. 6/-.

(b) Middle and Lower Income Groups are generally known to use only handwritten method of coveying a message. They pay only Rs. 0.50 which is absolute minimum. Only rich and well to do are known to use printed post cards who can afford to pay price which is close to its cost of operation.

(c) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Towers of BSNL

211. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is aware that nearly 900 towers of BSNL which can provide mobile connection to 10 laks subscribers are lying idle ever after their erecting for the last one year in Andhra Pradesh;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.